

Dining room essentials

Good practice for quality dementia care. An A-Z of strategies, checklists and tools

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- ▶ Increase lighting and control glare to aid independence and improve people's ability to see and eat.
- ▶ Place a large clock and large-print sign in the dining area to identify which meal people are eating.
- ▶ Use warm, strong colour schemes to encourage conversation and interaction. Coral, peach and soft yellows encourage eating.
- ▶ Set up family style dining at small tables to increase social interaction.
- ▶ Think about the usefulness of furnishing and fittings from the point of view of a person with dementia.
- ▶ Use bullnose or round-edged treatments on tables as these are more comfortable to rest against.
- ▶ Use square tables to clearly define eating areas.
- ▶ Use strongly contrasting borders around edges of tables to improve visibility and distinguish one table from the next.
- ▶ Use wood or wood laminate table tops. They have a warm and familiar ambience and reduce glare.
- ▶ Colour contrast table cloths or place mats with dishes so plates stand out against a background.
- ▶ Note that tables with four legs are sturdy, but tables with a centre pedestal can be adjusted to accommodate wheelchairs.
- ▶ Note that chairs with arms provide support but must fit under tables so people are able to move in close.
- ▶ Place flowers in the centre of the table to brighten up dining rooms and create a home-like feeling.
- ▶ Use ambient lighting, for example cove lighting combined with decorative lighting, to provide a warm and comfortable feel.
- ▶ Install adjustable lighting that can be turned up at breakfast and down at lunchtime, depending on the quantity of natural light.

Further information

Well for Life: Improving nutrition and physical activity for residents of aged care facilities. Available at: www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/publications/wellforlife.htm

For related information, see the following checklists

- ▶ [Colour strategies](#)
- ▶ [Eating: checklist for positive experiences](#)
- ▶ [Eating, dining areas and kitchens](#)
- ▶ [Interior design](#)
- ▶ [New residential facilities](#)
- ▶ [Surfaces: strategies for floors, walls and ceilings](#)